

A Noncollision Periodic Solution for N-Body Problems¹

Shiqing Zhang

*Department of Mathematics, Shanghai Jiao Tong University,
Shanghai 200030, People's Republic of China; and
Department of Mathematics, Chongqing University,
Chongqing 400044, People's Republic of China*

and

Qing Zhou

*Department of Mathematics, East China Normal University,
Shanghai 200062, People's Republic of China*

Submitted by F. E. Udwalia

Received April 11, 2000

Using variational minimization methods, we prove the existence of one noncollision periodic solution for N-body type problems whose potentials are pinched between two homogeneous potentials in \mathbf{R}^k ($k \geq 2$). © 2001 Academic Press

Key Words: N-body problems; noncollision periodic solution; variational methods.

1. INTRODUCTION AND MAIN RESULTS

The motion of N-body type problems [1, 2, 9, 12, 19, 20] is related with solving the following second order differential equations,

$$m_i \ddot{q}_i = \frac{\partial U}{\partial q_i}, \quad (1.1)$$

where $m_i > 0$ is the mass of the i th body and $q_i \in \mathbf{R}^k$ ($k \geq 2$) is the position of the i th body, and the potential

$$U(q) = U(q_1, \dots, q_N) = \sum_{1 \leq i < j \leq N} U_{ij}(q_i - q_j), \quad (1.2)$$

where $U_{ij}(x) \in C^1(\mathbf{R}^k \setminus \{0\}, \mathbf{R})$.

¹Partially supported by grants of MOST, NSFC, and QSSTF.



In the last 20 years, some researchers applied variational methods to study the periodic solutions of N-body type problems [3–8, 10, 13, 14, 18, 21, 22], but they didn't get the existence of one noncollision periodic solution for any given masses of N bodies. Observing the symmetry and choosing a suitable domain of the Lagrangian action integral for (1.1), we prove that the minimizer of the Lagrangian action integral is one noncollision periodic solution of (1.1)–(1.2) assuming the potential $U(q)$ is pinched between two homogeneous potentials.

Let $O(k)$ ($k \geq 2$) denote the rotational group in \mathbf{R}^k and

$$A(\theta) = \begin{pmatrix} B(\theta) & 0 \\ 0 & -I_{k-2} \end{pmatrix} \in O(k) \quad (1.3)$$

$$\theta \in (0, 2\pi),$$

where I_{k-2} is a unit matrix with order $k-2$ and

$$B(\theta) = \begin{pmatrix} \cos \theta & -\sin \theta \\ \sin \theta & \cos \theta \end{pmatrix}. \quad (1.4)$$

Let

$$H = W^{1,2}(\mathbf{R}/_{TZ}, \mathbf{R}^k) \quad (1.5)$$

$$H_{\#} = \left\{ x \in H \mid x\left(t + \frac{T}{r}\right) = A\left(\frac{2\pi}{r}\right)x(t), r \geq 2 \text{ an integer} \right\} \quad (1.6)$$

$$E = \{q = (q_1, \dots, q_N) \mid q_i - q_j \in H_{\#}, i, j = 1, \dots, N\}$$

$$\tilde{E} = \left\{ q = (q_1, \dots, q_N) \in E \mid \sum_{i=1}^N m_i q_i(t) \equiv 0 \right\} \quad (1.7)$$

$$\Lambda = \left\{ q = (q_1, \dots, q_N) \in \tilde{E} \mid q_i(t) \neq q_j(t), \right. \\ \left. \forall t \in \mathbf{R}, 1 \leq i \neq j \leq N \right\} \quad (1.8)$$

$$f(q) = \frac{1}{2} \int_0^T \sum_{i=1}^N m_i |\dot{q}_i|^2 dt + \int_0^T U(q) dt. \quad (1.9)$$

THEOREM 1.1. Assume $U(q)$ satisfies

(1)

$$\frac{a}{2} \sum_{1 \leq i < j \leq N} \frac{m_i m_j}{|q_i - q_j|^{\alpha}} \leq U(q) \leq \frac{b}{2} \sum_{1 \leq i < j \leq N} \frac{m_i m_j}{|q_i - q_j|^{\alpha}}, \quad \alpha > 0 \quad (1.10)$$

(2)

$$U(Aq) = U(q), \quad (1.11)$$

for some

$$A = A(2\pi/r) \in O(k),$$

where r will be defined later.

Then there is an integer r depending on α and masses m_1, \dots, m_N such that the minimizer of $f(q)$ on $\bar{\Lambda}$ is one noncollision T -periodic solution for (1.1)–(1.2).

THEOREM 1.2. *If $\alpha = 1$, $N = 3$, $m_1 = m_2 = m_3 = 1$, and $a = b = 1$ then the minimizer of $f(q)$ on $\bar{\Lambda}$ with $r = 2$ is one noncollision T -periodic solution.*

Remark. The domain Λ for $f(q)$ is different from the one defined by Bessi and Coti Zelati [4].

2. THE PROOF OF THEOREM 1.1

In order to prove Theorem 1.1, first we give some lemmas:

LEMMA 2.1. *The critical points of $f(q)$ in Λ are noncollision T -periodic solutions of (1.1)–(1.2).*

First, we prove that the critical point $q \in \tilde{E}$ for $f(q)$ restricted on \tilde{E} is also a critical point for $f(q)$ on E .

In fact, the condition that the center of masses is fixed at the origin is equivalent to

$$g(q) = \left| \sum_{i=1}^N m_i q_i(t) \right|^2 \equiv 0. \quad (2.1)$$

Hence by the Lagrangian multiplier rule, for any critical point q of $f(q)$ on \tilde{E} , we have

$$f'(q) + \lambda g'(q) = 0; \quad (2.2)$$

that is, for any $\varphi = (\varphi_1, \dots, \varphi_N)$, $\varphi_i \in W^{1,2}(\mathbf{R}/T\mathbf{Z}, \mathbf{R}^k)$ we have

$$\langle f'(q), \varphi \rangle + \lambda \langle g'(q), \varphi \rangle = 0 \quad (2.3)$$

$$\langle f'(q), \varphi \rangle + 2\lambda \left| \sum_{i=1}^N m_i q_i \right| \sum_{i=1}^N \langle m_i \dot{q}_i, \varphi_i \rangle = 0, \quad (2.4)$$

that is,

$$\langle f'(q), \varphi \rangle = 0. \quad (2.5)$$

Now assume $q \in E$ is a critical point of $f(q)$ on E . Then

$$\langle f'(q), y \rangle = 0, \quad \forall y \in E. \quad (2.6)$$

Hence we have $p = (p_1, \dots, p_N) \in E^\perp$, where

$$p_i \equiv \ddot{q}_i - \frac{\partial U}{\partial q_i}, \quad i = 1, \dots, N. \quad (2.7)$$

On the other hand, we notice that

$$\begin{aligned} p_i - p_j &= \ddot{q}_i - \ddot{q}_j - \frac{\partial U}{\partial q_i} + \frac{\partial U}{\partial q_j} \\ &= (q_i - q_j)'' - \sum_{j \neq i, j=1}^N \frac{a\alpha m_i m_j (q_j - q_i)}{|q_i - q_j|^{\alpha+2}} \\ &\quad + \sum_{i \neq j, i=1}^N \frac{a\alpha m_i m_j (q_i - q_j)}{|q_j - q_i|^{\alpha+2}}. \end{aligned} \quad (2.8)$$

Hence $p_i - p_j \in H_\#$, $p \in E$. Hence $p \in E^\perp \cap E = \{0\}$; that is, q is a solution of (1.1).

LEMMA 2.2. *The functional f is coercive on Λ ; that is, for any $\{q_n\} \sqsubset \Lambda$, $\|q_n\|_H \rightarrow +\infty$, $f(q_n) \rightarrow +\infty$.*

Proof. For any $q = (q_1, \dots, q_N) \in \Lambda$, we have

$$\begin{aligned} (q_i - q_j) \left(t + \frac{T}{r} \right) &\equiv q_i \left(t + \frac{T}{r} \right) - q_j \left(t + \frac{T}{r} \right) \\ &= A \left(\frac{2\pi}{r} \right) (q_i(t) - q_j(t)) \\ &\equiv A \left(\frac{2\pi}{r} \right) (q_i - q_j)(t) \end{aligned} \quad (2.9)$$

$$\begin{aligned} &\left| (q_i - q_j) \left(t + \frac{T}{t} \right) - (q_i - q_j)(t) \right|^2 \\ &= \left| A \left(\frac{2\pi}{r} \right) (q_i - q_j)(t) - (q_i - q_j)(t) \right|^2 \\ &= \left| 2 \sin \frac{\pi}{r} \right|^2 |(q_i - q_j)(t)|^2. \end{aligned} \quad (2.10)$$

On the other hand,

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \left| (q_i - q_j) \left(t + \frac{T}{r} \right) - (q_i - q_j)(t) \right|^2 \\
 &= \left| \int_t^{t+\frac{T}{r}} (\dot{q}_i - \dot{q}_j) dt \right|^2 \\
 &\leq \frac{T}{r} \left(\int_t^{t+\frac{T}{r}} |(\dot{q}_i - \dot{q}_j)(t)|^2 dt \right) \\
 &= \frac{T}{r^2} \int_0^T |(\dot{q}_i - \dot{q}_j)(t)|^2 dt.
 \end{aligned} \tag{2.11}$$

Hence we have

$$\int_0^T |(\dot{q}_i - \dot{q}_j)(t)|^2 dt \geq \frac{r^2}{T} \left| 2 \sin \frac{\pi}{r} \right|^2 |(q_i - q_j)(t)|^2 \tag{2.12}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \int_0^T \sum_{1 \leq i < j \leq N} m_i m_j |\dot{q}_i - \dot{q}_j|^2 dt \\
 & \geq \frac{r^2}{T} \left| 2 \sin \frac{\pi}{r} \right|^2 \sum_{1 \leq i < j \leq N} m_i m_j |q_i - q_j|^2
 \end{aligned} \tag{2.13}$$

$$M \int_0^T \sum_{i=1}^N m_i |\dot{q}_i|^2 dt \geq \frac{r^2}{T} \left| 2 \sin \frac{\pi}{r} \right|^2 M \sum_{i=1}^N m_i |q_i|^2, \tag{2.14}$$

where

$$M = \sum_{i=1}^N m_i. \tag{2.15}$$

Hence the standard norm for H is equivalent to

$$\|\dot{q}\|_2 = \left(\int_0^1 \sum_{i=1}^N m_i |\dot{q}_i|^2 dt \right)^{1/2}. \tag{2.16}$$

Hence the definition of $f(q)$ implies f is coercive.

LEMMA 2.3. *The system (1.1)–(1.2) has a weak T -periodic solution $q = (q_1, \dots, q_N) \in \bar{\Lambda}$ in the sense of Bari and Rabinowitz [3]:*

(1°) $q_i \in W^{1,2}(\mathbf{R}/T\mathbf{Z}, \mathbf{R}^k)$.

(2°) *The collision set $C = \{t \in [0, T] | q_i(t) = q_j(t) \text{ for some } 1 \leq i \neq j \leq N\}$ has Lebesgue measure 0.*

(3°) q_i is C^2 on $[0, T] \setminus C$ and satisfies (1.1) and energy conservation,

$$\frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^N m_i |\dot{q}_i|^2 - U(q_1, \dots, q_N) = h. \quad (2.17)$$

Proof. It's easy to prove $f(q)$ has positive lower bound and is weakly lower semi-continuous, so Lemma 2.2 implies Lemma 2.3.

In order to get a good lower bound estimate of $f(q)$ on the collision solutions, we need another lemma:

LEMMA 2.4. *Let index sets A and B satisfy $A \cap B = \emptyset$ and $A \cup B = \{1, 2, \dots, N\}$. Then*

$$\begin{aligned} & \sum_{(i,j) \in A \times B} \frac{m_i m_j}{|q_i - q_j|^\alpha} \\ & \geq \left(\sum_{(i,j) \in (A \times B)} m_i m_j \right)^{1+\frac{\alpha}{2}} \left(\sum_{(i,j) \in (A \times B)} m_i m_j |q_i - q_j|^2 \right)^{-\frac{\alpha}{2}}. \end{aligned} \quad (2.18)$$

For the proof of Lemma 2.4 refer to Long and Zhang [13]. In order to facilitate the reader, we repeat it. By Hölder's inequality, we have

$$\left(\sum_{i \in A, j \in B} m_i m_j \right)^2 \leq \left(\sum_{i \in A, j \in B} \frac{m_i m_j}{|q_i - q_j|^\alpha} \right) \left(\sum_{i \in A, j \in B} m_i m_j |q_i - q_j|^\alpha \right). \quad (2.19)$$

By Hölder's inequality, we have

$$\begin{aligned} & \sum_{i \in A, j \in B} m_i m_j |q_i - q_j|^\alpha \\ & \leq \left(\sum_{i \in A, j \in B} m_i m_j \right)^{\frac{2-\alpha}{2}} \left(\sum_{i \in A, j \in B} m_i m_j |q_i - q_j|^2 \right)^{\alpha/2}. \end{aligned} \quad (2.20)$$

By (2.19) and (2.20) we get (2.18).

Now we estimate the lower bound of $f(q)$ on the collision solutions. Let S_N denote the group of all the permutations of $\{1, \dots, N\}$. For $l = 2, \dots, N$, we set

$$\partial \Lambda_l = \{q \in E \mid \exists s \in S_N, \exists \bar{t} \in [0, T] \text{ s.t. } q_{s(1)}(\bar{t}) = \dots = q_{s(l)}(\bar{t})\}. \quad (2.21)$$

First, we assume $l = 2$, s is the identity, and $\bar{t} = 0$. Then by the Lagrangian identity and the symmetry property $(q_i - q_j)(t + \frac{T}{r}) = A(\frac{2\pi}{r})(q_i - q_j)(t)$ we have

$$f(q) \geq g_1(q) + g_2(q) + g_3(q), \quad (2.22)$$

where

$$g_1(q) = r \left[\frac{1}{2M} \sum_{1 \leq i \neq j \leq 2} m_i m_j \times \int_0^{T/r} \left(\frac{1}{2} |\dot{q}_i - \dot{q}_j|^2 + Ma \frac{1}{|q_i - q_j|^\alpha} \right) dt \right] \quad (2.23)$$

$$g_2(q) = r \left[\frac{1}{2M} \sum_{3 \leq i \neq j \leq N} m_i m_j \times \int_0^{T/r} \left(\frac{1}{2} |\dot{q}_i - \dot{q}_j|^2 + Ma \frac{1}{|q_i - q_j|^\alpha} \right) dt \right] \quad (2.24)$$

$$g_3(q) = r \left[\frac{2}{2M} \sum_{1 \leq i \leq 2, 3 \leq j \leq N} m_i m_j \times \int_0^{T/r} \left(\frac{1}{2} |\dot{q}_i - \dot{q}_j|^2 + Ma \frac{1}{|q_i - q_j|^\alpha} \right) dt \right]. \quad (2.25)$$

Using the estimates of the Lagrangian action integral on collision solutions of two body [7] problems we have

LEMMA 2.5.

$$g_1(q) \geq C_1 r^{\frac{2\alpha}{2+\alpha}} T^{\frac{2-\alpha}{2+\alpha}}, \quad (2.26)$$

where

$$C_1 = AM_2^{\frac{-\alpha}{2+\alpha}} \sum_{1 \leq i \neq j \leq 2} m_i m_j \quad (2.27)$$

$$M_2 = \sum_{i=1}^2 m_i \quad (2.28)$$

$$A = \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{\alpha} \right) (\alpha a)^{2/(\alpha+2)} (2\pi)^{\frac{2\alpha}{2+\alpha}}. \quad (2.29)$$

Let

$$B_2 = \min_{s \in S_N} \frac{\sum_{1 \leq i \neq j \leq 2} m_{s(i)} m_{s(j)}}{\left(\sum_{i=1}^2 m_{s(i)} \right)^{\alpha/(2+\alpha)}} \quad (2.30)$$

$$\widetilde{C}_1 = AB_2. \quad (2.31)$$

Then

$$\inf \{g_1(q), q \in \partial \Lambda_2\} \geq \widetilde{C}_1 r^{\frac{2\alpha}{2+\alpha}} T^{\frac{2-\alpha}{2+\alpha}}. \quad (2.32)$$

By the arguments of Degiovanni and Giannoni [7], we can get the lower bound estimate on $g_2(q)$,

$$g_2(q) \geq C_2 T^{\frac{2-\alpha}{2+\alpha}}, \quad (2.33)$$

where

$$C_2 = AM_{N-2}^{\frac{-\alpha}{2+\alpha}} \sum_{i=3}^N m_i m_j \quad (2.34)$$

$$M_{N-2} = \sum_{i=3}^N m_i. \quad (2.35)$$

Let

$$B_{N-2} = \min_{s \in S_N} \frac{\sum_{3 \leq i \neq j \leq N} m_{s(i)} m_{s(j)}}{(\sum_{i=3}^N m_{s(i)})^{\alpha/(2+\alpha)}} \quad (2.36)$$

$$\widetilde{C}_2 = AB_{N-2}. \quad (2.37)$$

Then

$$\inf\{g_2(q), q \in \partial\Lambda_2\} \geq \widetilde{C}_2 T^{\frac{2-\alpha}{2+\alpha}}. \quad (2.38)$$

We use inequality (2.18) of Lemma 2.4, Sundman's inequality [19], and the arguments of Degiovanni and Giannoni [7] to estimate the lower bound for $g_3(q)$:

$$\begin{aligned} g_3(q) &\geq \frac{1}{2M} \int_0^T \sum_{1 \leq i \leq 2, 3 \leq j \leq N} m_i m_j |\dot{q}_i - \dot{q}_j|^2 dt + a \left(\sum_{1 \leq i \leq 2, 3 \leq j \leq N} m_i m_j \right)^{1+\frac{\alpha}{2}} \\ &\quad \times \left(\sum_{1 \leq i \leq 2, 3 \leq j \leq N} m_i m_j |q_i - q_j|^2 \right)^{-\alpha/2} dt \end{aligned} \quad (2.39)$$

$$\begin{aligned} &\geq \frac{1}{2M} \int_0^T \left| \frac{d}{dt} \left[\left(\sum_{1 \leq i \leq 2, 3 \leq j \leq N} m_i m_j |q_i - q_j|^2 \right)^{1/2} \right] \right|^2 dt \\ &\quad + a \left(\sum_{1 \leq i \leq 2, 3 \leq j \leq N} m_i m_j \right)^{1+\frac{\alpha}{2}} \\ &\quad \times \int_0^T \left(\sum_{1 \leq i \leq 2, 3 \leq j \leq N} m_i m_j |q_i - q_j|^2 \right)^{-\alpha/2} dt \end{aligned} \quad (2.40)$$

$$\begin{aligned} &\geq \inf \left\{ \frac{1}{2M} \int_0^T |\dot{r}|^2 dt + a \left(\sum_{1 \leq i \leq 2, 3 \leq j \leq N} m_i m_j \right)^{1+\frac{\alpha}{2}} \right. \\ &\quad \left. \times \int_0^T r^{-\alpha} dt \mid r \in W^{1,2}([0, T], R^+) \right\} \end{aligned} \quad (2.41)$$

$$= T \inf \left\{ \frac{1}{2M} \left(\frac{2\pi}{T} \right)^2 R^2 + a \left(\sum_{1 \leq i \leq 2, 3 \leq j \leq N} m_i m_j \right)^{1 + \frac{\alpha}{2}} \times \frac{1}{R^\alpha}, R > 0 \right\} \quad (2.42)$$

$$\begin{aligned} &= \left(\frac{\alpha}{2} \right)^{\frac{2}{\alpha+2}} \left(1 + \frac{2}{\alpha} \right) \left[\frac{1}{2M} \left(\frac{2\pi}{T} \right)^2 \right]^{\frac{\alpha}{\alpha+2}} \left[\left(a \sum_{1 \leq i \leq 2, 3 \leq j \leq N} m_i m_j \right)^{1 + \frac{\alpha}{2}} \right]^{\frac{2}{\alpha+2}} \\ &= \left(\frac{\alpha}{2} \right)^{\frac{2}{\alpha+2}} \left(1 + \frac{2}{\alpha} \right) (2\pi^2)^{\frac{\alpha}{\alpha+2}} M^{-\frac{\alpha}{\alpha+2}} a^{\frac{2}{\alpha+2}} \left(\sum_{1 \leq i \leq 2, 3 \leq j \leq N} m_i m_j \right) T^{\frac{2-\alpha}{2+\alpha}} \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \left(1 + \frac{2}{\alpha} \right) (\alpha a)^{\frac{2}{\alpha+2}} (2\pi)^{\frac{2\alpha}{\alpha+2}} M^{-\frac{\alpha}{\alpha+2}} \left(\sum_{1 \leq i \leq 2, 3 \leq j \leq N} m_i m_j \right) T^{\frac{2-\alpha}{2+\alpha}} \\ &= 2AM^{-\frac{\alpha}{\alpha+2}} \left(\sum_{1 \leq i \leq 2, 3 \leq j \leq N} m_i m_j \right) T^{\frac{2-\alpha}{2+\alpha}} \equiv C_3 T^{\frac{2-\alpha}{2+\alpha}}. \end{aligned} \quad (2.43)$$

Let

$$B = \frac{\min_{s \in S_N} \sum_{1 \leq i \leq 2, 3 \leq j \leq N} m_{s(i)} m_{s(j)}}{M^{\alpha/(\alpha+2)}} \quad (2.44)$$

$$\widetilde{C}_3 = 2AB. \quad (2.45)$$

Then

$$\inf \{g_3(q), q \in \partial\Lambda_2\} \geq \widetilde{C}_3 T^{\frac{2-\alpha}{2+\alpha}} \quad (2.46)$$

$$\inf \{f(q), q \in \partial\Lambda_2\} \geq (\widetilde{C}_1 r^{\frac{2\alpha}{2+\alpha}} + \widetilde{C}_2 + \widetilde{C}_3) T^{\frac{2-\alpha}{2+\alpha}}. \quad (2.47)$$

It's easy to see that for $l > 2$ we also have

$$\inf \{f(q), q \in \partial\Lambda_l\} \geq (\widetilde{C}_1 r^{\frac{2\alpha}{2+\alpha}} + \widetilde{C}_2 + \widetilde{C}_3) T^{\frac{2-\alpha}{2+\alpha}}. \quad (2.48)$$

Remark. The corresponding lower bound estimate in Bessi and Coti Zelati [4] is not correct since the symmetry breaks down when they move the binary collision to the origin and they work on their domain.

LEMMA 2.6 [6]. *Let*

$$\rho = \sum_{1 \leq i \neq j \leq N} \frac{m_i m_j}{|\sin(\pi(i-j))/N|^\alpha} \quad (2.49)$$

$$\sigma = \sum_{1 \leq i \neq j \leq N} m_i m_j \left| \sin \frac{\pi(i-j)}{N} \right|^2. \quad (2.50)$$

Then the minimizing value for Lagrangian action $f(q)$ has upper bound estimate

$$\begin{aligned} f(q) &\leq \frac{1}{2} \left(\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{\alpha} \right) (b\alpha)^{\frac{2}{2+\alpha}} (2\pi)^{\frac{2\alpha}{\alpha+2}} \rho^{\frac{2}{\alpha+2}} \sigma^{\frac{\alpha}{\alpha+2}} M^{-\alpha/(\alpha+2)} T^{\frac{2-\alpha}{2+\alpha}} \\ &\equiv \widetilde{C} T^{\frac{2-\alpha}{2+\alpha}}. \end{aligned} \quad (2.51)$$

Now we can prove Theorem 1.1.

Assume the minimizer q for $f(q)$ on $\bar{\Lambda}$ has a collision time $\bar{t} \in [0, T]$. Then by Lemma 2.5, we can get a lower bound estimate $(\widetilde{C}_1 r^{2\alpha/(2+\alpha)} + \widetilde{C}_2 + \widetilde{C}_3) T^{(2-\alpha)/(2+\alpha)}$ for $f(q)$, which depends on the integer $r \geq 2$. By Lemma 2.6 we can choose r large enough so that

$$\widetilde{C}_1 r^{\frac{2\alpha}{2+\alpha}} + \widetilde{C}_2 + \widetilde{C}_3 > \widetilde{C}. \quad (2.52)$$

This is a contradiction.

Now we prove Theorem 1.2.

If $\alpha = 1$, $m_1 = m_2 = m_3 = 1$, $a = 1$, and $r = 2$ then we have

$$\begin{aligned} A &= \frac{3}{4} (2\pi)^{2/3} \\ B_2 &= 2^{2/3} \\ \widetilde{C}_1 &= 3 \cdot 2^{-4/3} (2\pi)^{2/3}, \quad \widetilde{C}_1 r^{\frac{2\alpha}{2+\alpha}} = 3 \cdot 2^{-2/3} (2\pi)^{2/3} \\ \widetilde{C}_2 &= 0 \\ B &= 2 \cdot 3^{-1/3} \\ \widetilde{C}_3 &= 2AB = 3^{2/3} (2\pi)^{2/3} \\ \widetilde{C}_1 r^{\frac{2\alpha}{2+\alpha}} + \widetilde{C}_2 + \widetilde{C}_3 &= (3 \cdot 2^{-2/3} + 3^{2/3}) (2\pi)^{2/3}. \end{aligned}$$

On the other hand, we compute

$$\begin{aligned} \rho &= \sum_{1 \leq i \neq j \leq 3} \frac{1}{|\sin(\pi(i-j))/3|} = \frac{2}{\sqrt{3}} 6 = 4 \cdot 3^{1/2} \\ \sigma &= \sum_{1 \leq i \neq j \leq 3} \left| \sin \frac{\pi(i-j)}{3} \right|^2 = 6 \left| \sin \frac{\pi}{3} \right|^2 = \frac{9}{2} \\ \widetilde{C} &= \frac{1}{2} \frac{3}{2} (2\pi)^{2/3} (4 \cdot 3^{1/2})^{2/3} \left(\frac{9}{2} \right)^{1/3} \cdot 3^{-1/3} \\ &= \frac{1}{2} 3^{5/3} (2\pi)^{2/3} < (3 \cdot 2^{-2/3} + 3^{2/3}) (2\pi)^{2/3} \\ &= \widetilde{C}_1 r^{\frac{2\alpha}{2+\alpha}} + \widetilde{C}_2 + \widetilde{C}_3. \end{aligned}$$

REFERENCES

1. R. Abraham and J. Marsden, "Foundations of Mechanics," 2nd ed., Benjamin/Cummings, London, 1978.
2. V. Arnold, V. Kozlov, and A. Neishtadt, "Dynamical Systems. III. Mathematical Aspects of Classical and Celestial Mechanics," Russian ed., 1985; English ed., Springer-Verlag, Berlin, 1988.
3. A. Bahri and P. Rabinowitz, Periodic solutions of Hamiltonian systems of three-body type, *Ann. Inst. H. Poincaré Anal. Non Linéaire* **8** (1991), 561–649.
4. U. Bessi and V. Coti Zelati, Symmetries and noncollision closed orbits for planar N -body-type problems, *Nonlinear Anal.* **16** (1991), 587–598.
5. A. Chenciner and N. Desolneux, Minima de l'intégrale d'action et équilibres relatifs de n corps, *C. R. Acad. Sci. Paris Ser. I Math.* **326** (1998), 1209–1212.
6. V. Coti Zelati, The periodic solutions of N -body type problems, *Ann. Inst. H. Poincaré Anal. Non Linéaire* **7** (1990), 477–492.
7. M. Degiovanni and F. Giannoni, Dynamical systems with Newtonian type potentials, *Ann. Scuola Norm. Sup. Pisa* **15** (1989), 467–494.
8. G. F. Dell'Antonio, Classical solutions of a perturbed N -body system, in "Topological Nonlinear Analysis, II" (M. Matzeu and A. Vignoli, Eds.), pp. 1–86, Birkhäuser, Basel, 1997.
9. L. Euler, De motu rectilineo trium corpörum se mutuo attrahentium, *Novi. Comm. Acad. Sci. Imp. Petropol.* (1767), 145–151.
10. W. Gordon, A minimizing property of Keplerian orbits, *Amer. J. Math.* **99** (1977), 961–971.
11. G. Hardy, J. Littlewood, and G. Polya, "Inequalities," 2nd ed., Cambridge Univ. Press, Cambridge, UK, 1952.
12. J. Lagrange, Essai sur le problème des trois corps, 1772, *Ouvres* **3** (1783), 229–331.
13. Y. Long and S. Zhang, Geometric characterizations for variational minimization solutions of the 3-body problem, Abstract, *Chinese Sci. Bull.* **44**, No. 18 (1999), 1653–1654; *Acta Math. Sinica*, (English series), **16** (2000), 579–592.
14. Y. Long and S. Zhang, Geometric characterizations for variational minimization solutions of the 3-body problem with fixed energy, *J. Differential Equations* **160** (2000), 422–438.
15. K. Meyer and G. Hall, "Introduction to Hamiltonian Systems and the N -Body Problems," Springer-Verlag, Berlin, 1992.
16. H. Pollard, "Celestial Mechanics," Amer. Math. Soc., Providence, 1976.
17. P. Rabinowitz, Periodic solutions of Hamiltonian systems, *Comm. Pure Appl. Math.* **31** (1978), 157–184.
18. E. Serra and S. Terracini, Collisionless periodic solutions to some three-body problems, *Arch. Rational Mech. Anal.* **120** (1992), 305–325.
19. C. Siegel and J. Moser, "Lectures on Celestial Mechanics," Springer-Verlag, Berlin, 1971.
20. A. Wintner, "Analytical Foundations of Celestial Mechanics," Princeton Univ. Press, Princeton, NJ, 1941.
21. S. Zhang and Q. Zhou, Geometric characterization for the least Lagrangian action of N -body problems, *Science in China* **44** (2001), 15–20.
22. S. Zhang and Q. Zhou, A minimizing property of Lagrangian solutions, *Acta Math. Sinica.*, to appear.